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ABSTRACT

An investigation was designed to test the proposition that people who are apprehensive about crime will exhibit a greater preference for crime drama that features the restoration of justice than will those people who are less apprehensive about crime. Undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory mass communications course served as subjects. Subjects' initial apprehension about crime was manipulated via exposure either to a specially edited crime documentary or to a control film. They were then given an opportunity to select films to be viewed from a list. This list contained film descriptions that varied (according to a pretest) in the degree to which they featured victimization and justice restoration. Analysis of the victimization scores of the films selected showed that apprehensive subjects (those exposed to the crime documentary) chose films with less victimization than their counterparts in the control group. Analysis of the justice restoration scores indicated that apprehensive subjects chose films that featured more justice than did their counterparts in the control group. The findings are incompatible with the notion that exposure to crime drama "cultivates" fear of crime but are consistent with several selective exposure rationales for the well-documented relationship between exposure to television--and crime drama in particular--and fear of crime. (HOD)

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SELECTIVE EXPOSURE TO FICTIONAL DRAMA AS A FUNCTION OF APPREHENSION ABOUT CRIME

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Selective Exposure to Fictional Drama as a Function of Apprehension About Crime

Gerbner and Gross (1976a, 1976b) have suggested that the overemphasis of violence on television gives viewers exaggerated impressions of the extent of threat and danger in society, cultivating fear and distrust of their fellow citizens in real life. They propose that heavy exposure to media violence causes viewers to consider it increasingly likely that they might become victims of violent crime and that, as a consequence, they become acutely fearful for their personal safety. In support of their proposal, these researchers provide correlational data which indicate a relatively weak but statistically reliable positive association between amount of television viewing and both social distrust and anticipated victimization. More recent research conducted by Gerbner and his colleagues with child respondents (Gerbner, Gross, Eleey, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli, 1977; Gerbner, Gross, Signorielli, Morgan, & Jackson-Beeck, 1979) produced similar results.

Recently, however, Doob & MacDonald (1979) severely challenged the validity of a causal connection from heavy television consumption to fear of victimization. After controlling for the density of crime in the viewer's neighborhood, the researchers reported that there was ". . . essentially no relationship between media usage and fear of crime (p. 173)." Only in the high crime city neighborhood was there some correlation between media use and fear of crime. Thus, the observed association between heavy viewing and fear of victimization is largely due to situational circumstances, and the presumption that viewing causes fear may be entirely misleading. Gerbner's research has been criticized on other methodological grounds by Hughes (1980)

and Hirsch (1980). Both researchers, reanalyzing data reported in Gerbner, Gross, Eleey, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, and Signorielli (1978), using simultaneous rather than individual controls for demographic factors such as age, sex, and education, failed to obtain most of the correlations reported by Gerbner et al. (1978). In addition, Hirsch (1980) seems to have faulted the correlations altogether by showing that nonviewers--whose reactions had been pooled by Gerbner et al. (1978) with light viewers--tended to be more fearful than those who watch television. This finding, according to Hirsch (1980), is clearly counter to the "cultivation hypothesis."

Gerbner and his colleagues (1980a, 1980b) account for these inconsistencies in a refinement of the cultivation hypothesis known as "resonance." They assert that television's effect is strongest among viewers whose real life situations most closely parallel those portrayed on television. When an issue is relevant to a viewer's everyday life, television will "resonate" and amplify the cultivation effect. Thus, Doob and MacDonald's (1979) finding that city dwellers who live in high crime neighborhoods demonstrate the cultivation of fear emerged because the portrayal of crime on television is particularly salient to their lives. Similarly, Hirsch's (1980) finding that nonviewers and heavy viewers did not demonstrate the cultivation of fear is explainable by claiming that these individuals are not part of a group for whom crime is particularly salient. The inclusion of the "resonance" principle thus makes the cultivation hypothesis virtually impossible to disprove.

Regardless of how Gerbner and his colleagues accommodate the results of these other researchers, the correlational nature of the data precludes an assessment of causality. While heavy viewing may, in fact, "cultivate" fear and apprehension, the observed association between heavy television exposure

and fear is amenable to several alternate explanations. The relationship may be spurious and noncausal. An external factor--such as the viewers' perception of the likelihood of his or her own victimization resulting from living in a dangerous neighborhood--may cause both heavy viewing (as the individual stays home more) and fear. It is also possible, however, that the relationship is causal but, in a direction opposite that posited by the cultivation hypothesis: Fear for one's personal safety--produced in the Doob and MacDonald (1979) study by living in a dangerous neighborhood--causes the individual to stay home more which, in turn, allows him or her to watch more TV. A recent study by Jackson-Beeck and Sobal (1980) seems to confirm that city dwellers who watch great amounts of television are retired and ailing persons--persons especially vulnerable to victimization by crime and most likely to spend more time in their homes.

Clearly, correlational studies which support a relationship between apprehensions and fear of crime can be taken to support these causal possibilities. The assumption that the relationship is due to the cultivation of fear via heavy television viewing is clearly not warranted given the correlational nature of the data.

Arguments against the cultivation hypothesis have been based on theoretic ground as well. Interpreting the correlation between heavy exposure to television and fear as supporting the proposition that exposure to suspenseful drama causes apprehension conflicts with basic psychological principles (Zillmann, 1980). Programs which produce anxiety should be avoided if they produce such aversive states. Viewers who are particularly apprehensive of being a victim of violent crime should shun dramatic fare which features crime and the depiction of victimization. Thus, it is difficult to understand why such viewers would continue their heavy consumption of anxiety producing television fare.

Although popular crime drama may dwell on violent transgressions, it is ultimately the triumph of justice that is featured. The theme of almost all episodes of any drama series is the restoration of a safe and just world. If anything, this general theme should be particularly comforting and attractive to fearful or apprehensive viewers. Any night of the week, apprehensive viewers can be reassured that criminals are being caught and brought to justice. It is conceivable that worried persons find comfort in witnessing the "clean-up" operations of the police and other justice-restoring forces (Zillmann, 1980). In a related study, Bishop (1974) found that apprehensive individuals were more likely to expose themselves to reassuring rather than frightening content with no exposure differences among those who were not apprehensive. These results suggest that the happy ending of crime drama shows should be particularly attractive to apprehensive viewers.

Another rationale that similarly projects exposure to crime drama to be instrumental in the diminution of apprehensions is that of "mastery training." As early as 1939 (see also 1945), Fenichel suggested that anxious persons develop a "counterphobic attitude" that motivates them to confront--under safe conditions--fear-inducing stimuli. The continued experience of "mastery" of the situation, an experience supposed to provide "functional pleasure," was viewed as relieving an individual's anxiety and preparing him or her for confrontation with the actual fear-inducing event under normal circumstances.

Anxious people conceivably resort to watching much suspenseful drama because it reduces their anxieties. This sequence of events is not only predictable from consideration of the predominant theme of suspenseful drama on television--good weeding out evil--but is also in accord with expectations derived from behavior-modification theory (Bandura, 1969). Zillmann (1980) has argued that those who are acutely fearful respond more intensely to the

distressing parts of suspenseful drama. Repeated exposure to suspenseful drama, however, should produce habituation to the fear inducing stimuli, reducing the fear response. Thus, repeated exposure to such material suggests a diminution rather than an increase in fear.

Finally, the relationship between stress and the enjoyment of suspenseful drama provides an additional rationale for expecting crime drama to be particularly attractive to apprehensive viewers. Apprehensive persons should experience more distress while watching these shows and, as a consequence, the satisfying resolution--which invariably occurs in television--should yield even greater enjoyment of the program (Berlyne, 1960, 1967, 1973; Zillmann, 1980). If such is the case, apprehensive viewers should seek out suspenseful drama because such programs are likely to be more enjoyable for them than for their less apprehensive counterparts. Research conducted by Bergman (see Zillmann, 1980) supports the contention that greater stress coupled with a satisfying resolution produces greater enjoyment of dramatic fare.

Boyanowski, Newtson and Walster (1974) provide further evidence related to these "selective exposure" proposals. After the much publicized brutal murder of a freshman co-ed at the University of Wisconsin, attendance at a movie shown locally that featured psychopathic killings ("In Cold Blood") greatly increased--relative to a control condition. Despite the likelihood that the film reinstated salient anxieties, individuals (female students in particular) did not avoid it. Similarly, Boyanowski (1977) found that threatening conditions, which ostensibly evoke fear or apprehension, induce preferences for exciting stimuli, including some depicting aggression.

In a study examining the program preferences of fearful or anxious young boys, Harper, Munro, and Himmelweit (1970) found that fearful boys reported watching more comedies and more serious serials than their less fearful

counterparts. Thus, the affective state of the individual relates to preferences for particular types of media content. Research with older subjects (college students) supports this conclusion as well (Zillmann, Hezel, & Medoff, 1980).

Other recent research evidence applies less directly in that it addresses the relationship between aggressiveness and exposure to violent fare rather than between apprehension and crime drama. Nonetheless, the dilemma in evaluating causal connections is the same in both areas, and the recent research resolutions to the connection between aggressiveness and the viewing of crime drama are most informative.

In several correlational studies (cf. McLeod, Atkin, & Chaffee, 1972) a positive relationship between aggressiveness and exposure to violent programs has been observed. This correlation initially has been taken to support the view that exposure to violent fare increases aggressiveness. Recently, however, the opposite causal possibility has been explored. Atkin, Greenberg, Korzenny, and McDermott (1979) conducted a time-lag study which suggests that aggressiveness leads to increased exposure to violent fare. Even more recently, this suggestion has received experimental support. Fenigstein (1979) showed that both a preoccupation with aggressive thoughts and the actual commission of aggressive acts result in an increased appetite for aggressive fare.

In an experimental study designed to test the cultivation hypothesis, Bryant, Carveth, and Brown (1981) manipulated subjects' exposure to television over a period of six weeks. The heavy exposure condition was subdivided into exposure to crime fare that featured just vs. unjust resolutions. This variation was introduced to test for the possibility that if crime drama breeds fear (Gerbner & Gross, 1976a) it should breed the most in drama that fails to

present a just, pacifying resolution (Zillmann, 1980). Viewers' pre- and post-exposure fearfulness was also assessed. While effects were observed on some of the measures, others did not yield reliable differentiations. Exposure to drama which depicted unjust resolutions appeared to increase manifest anxiety and fearfulness regardless of the level of initial apprehension. Exposure to justice-depicting drama, on the other hand, resulted in a significant increase in fearfulness only in initially nonapprehensive persons. There was no corresponding effect for manifest anxiety in this condition. To the extent that this investigation simulates the presumably cumulative effects of exposure to violence-laden drama, it gives some support to the cultivation hypothesis. However, in view of the fact that (a) crime drama on TV almost always features just resolutions, (b) the expected breeding of fear was observed on only two measures and under limited circumstances and (c) increases in fear among initially less apprehensive viewers (which was the only effect observed for the drama which depicted justice) are readily explainable as regression artifacts, support for the cultivation proposal is highly questionable. Exposure to crime drama which is the most common--that which features just resolutions--yielded the weakest and most uncertain results. Further limitations on this study concern the assertions that (a) the effects observed are long term, and (b) attributable to long term exposure rather than to one (the last) exposure to crime drama. In this investigation, measures of fear and anxiety were taken immediately after exposure to crime drama (during the last experimental session). Thus, the data can be taken to support the contention that any observed effects were due to watching this last program rather than a series of programs. Likewise, assertions concerning the duration of any lasting effects are questionable.

A considerable amount of evidence suggests that there should be a preference for crime drama among persons apprehensive about crime. The present investigation was designed to test the proposition that people who are apprehensive about crime will exhibit a greater preference for crime drama which features the restoration of justice than those less apprehensive about crime.

A critical factor involved with exposure to crime drama as a function of initial apprehensions concerns the amount of victimization a viewer must witness before experiencing relief at the criminal's capture. The fearful viewer who endures 90 minutes of pain and suffering by a protagonist may be paying a dear price to be reassured in the last few minutes that justice will be served. On the other hand, this may be the price one has to pay to experience heightened enjoyment of crime drama. Thus, two factors were posited to influence exposure to crime drama among apprehensive viewers: the degree of victimization featured and the likelihood that justice will be restored. Persons who are more apprehensive about crime should exhibit a greater avoidance of films featuring extensive pain and suffering by crime victims--while at the same time seeking films featuring the depiction of justice--than persons who are less apprehensive about crime.

In the present study initial apprehension was varied by exposing subjects to a crime documentary or a non-crime control (documentary about life in the Himalayas). After viewing the film, subjects were given a list of film titles and descriptions and instructed to choose the ones they most wanted to see. These descriptions had been pretested and assigned scores for the amounts of victimization and justice restoration promised. According to pretest results the film descriptions differed in both the degree of victimization and justice restoration promised, but were equivalent in general appeal. The summed victimization scores and the summed justice restoration scores constituted

the dependent variables. Since apprehensions about personal safety are related to a person's sex, this factor was included to reduce error.

The basic design then was a 2 x 2 factorial arrangement with exposure to the crime documentary or the control film forming one factor and sex of subject the other. Subjects who were initially more apprehensive--by virtue of exposure to the crime documentary--were expected to avoid films which featured the depiction of victimization and seek those which featured greater degrees of justice when compared to subjects exposed to the control film.

Method

Subjects

Thirty-nine male and 45 female undergraduates enrolled in an introductory mass communications course served as subjects in the main experiment. An additional 52 undergraduates, enrolled in a different introductory mass communications course, and who did not participate in the main experiment, served as evaluators in the pretesting of the film descriptions. Experimental subjects were contacted in class and, if they were willing to participate, signed an informed consent statement which described the nature of the crime documentary they might see. No individual refused to participate on the basis of this description. Subjects were also informed that they were free to leave during the course of the experiment and would not be penalized if they chose to do so. No subjects chose to leave during the course of the experiment.

Experimental Materials

An 18 minute crime documentary, edited specifically for this experiment

was used to create apprehension about crime. The documentary was produced by editing together several police training films obtained from the Indiana State Law Enforcement Academy and appeared to be a single cohesive documentary program on crime. It included interviews with law enforcement personnel, convicted criminals, and actual crime victims. It was edited so as to emphasize the likelihood of a person becoming a victim of violence and to avoid precautions one might take to prevent or protect oneself from violent crime. The videotape contained one dramatization (the reinactment of a woman being raped), but contained no fictional violence.

A National Geographic documentary about life in the Himalayan Mountains, edited to be 18 minutes long, served as the control stimulus. It contained no scenes of crime or violence.

Procedure

Manipulation of initial apprehension. Subjects were tested in groups of six. Groups were randomly assigned to conditions. Subjects were met by a female experimenter and were told that the study was designed to investigate the effect of television screen size on attention to and enjoyment of televised material. They were told that they would first view a documentary program and then an entertainment program on a regular 17-inch (43 cm) color monitor, and that their reported levels of attention and enjoyment would be compared with those who viewed the same material on a much larger television screen.

After watching the stimulus, subjects were told they themselves would have a part in selecting the second film to be shown. Ostensibly in order to allow some randomization of their selections, and to keep all groups from selecting the same film, subjects were told that they had to list several

choices. The experimenter told them that she would randomly pick one film from the set of recommendations. Each subject then received a list of 14 film titles and descriptions and was told to nominate the seven they would most like to watch by writing their titles on a piece of paper. After collecting these responses the experimenter asked subjects to fill out a crime questionnaire while she ostensibly tallied their film preferences. Subjects were told that the purpose of the questionnaire would be explained later. In reality, it served as a check on the manipulation of apprehension about crime. After completing the questionnaire, subjects were fully debriefed about the actual purpose of the study, thanked, and dismissed.

Dependent Measures

Film descriptions from 1975-1978 Home Box Office program guides were manipulated and later revised to produce variability in justice restoration and victimization. To create varying levels of justice restoration film descriptions (a) indicated a criminal was caught or somehow was shown to receive his just punishment, or (b) indicated a criminal was never apprehended. To create varying levels of victimization film descriptions (a) described in vivid language the physical torment, pain, and suffering undergone by a defenseless crime victim at the hand of a vicious, cruel, ruthless, cold, and calculating criminal. These descriptions also contained a parenthetical warning about the amount of violence, and blood and gore, contained in the film, or (b) recounted "white-collar" or "victimless" crimes and contained no warning about the violence in the film.

The films were evaluated by 52 raters who used 10-point scales to rate the film descriptions on (a) the likelihood justice would prevail, (b) the perceived amount of pain and suffering depicted, and (c) overall interest and

appeal. The mean rating for each of the films was computed and assigned to each film. The film descriptions selected for the experiment differed in terms of justice restoration and victimization, but were equivalent in terms of general appeal and interest. The selection of films by experimental subjects would therefore be based on the film's content relative to justice restoration and victimization and not on its general interest or appeal. A victimization score for each subject was computed by summing the victimization ratings (as determined by the pretest) of the seven films he or she selected. A justice restoration score for each subject was similarly created by summing the justice restoration ratings of the seven films selected.

Manipulation Check

A brief questionnaire was devised to serve as a manipulation check on the effectiveness of the crime documentary in creating apprehension about being a victim of violent crime. The questionnaire contained two items adapted by Bryant, et al. (1981) from Gerbner and Gross (1976a) concerning one's fear of becoming a victim of violence and the perceived likelihood of one's becoming a victim of violence. It also contained three items regarding concern for safety in hypothetical situations, for example: "You're walking home from work at 1 am. Three men, obviously drunk, are walking towards you. No one else is around. How concerned would you be that you might be assaulted?"

Results

Success of the Manipulation of Apprehension

Oblique principal components factor analysis of the five items yielded two dimensions which were fairly independent (r=.30). The first factor,

which contained items reflecting fear and apprehension for one's personal safety accounted for 39% of the variance after rotation. The second factor, which contained an item reflecting worry over someone else being victimized and one reflecting perceptions of the likelihood of victimization accounted for 29% of the variance after rotation. Clearly, the first factor tapped the more salient affective features of the manipulation and should be the stronger determinant of subsequent exposure.

Factor scores were generated for the "personal apprehension" factor. A 2 x 2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) on personal apprehension factor scores, with exposure to the crime documentary or the control film as the first factor and sex of subject as the second factor yielded significant main effects for exposure conditions, F (1,80)=4.48, $p<.05$, and sex, F (1,80)=18.10, $p<.001$. The interaction was negligible, F (1,80)=1.66. As can be seen from the mean factor scores (Table 1) the crime documentary was successful in inducing apprehensions about personal safety.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Selective Exposure to Victimization

Analysis of variance was performed on the victimization scores (the summed victimization ratings of the films selected by the subject). The 2 x 2 unequal-N ANOVA, method of unweighted means, with apprehension about crime (induced by exposure to the crime documentary or the control film) as the first factor and sex of subject the second factor produced a significant main effect for apprehension condition, F (1,80)=4.26, $p<.05$, and sex, F (1,80)=9.79, $p<.01$. The interaction was negligible ($F<1$).

Mean victimization scores for the four conditions and the main effects of apprehension and sex are displayed in Table 2. As can be seen, subjects in the experimental condition--who were made more apprehensive about crime via exposure to the crime documentary--selected films with lower victimization scores than their counterparts in the control condition. Similarly, females--who, according to results obtained in the manipulation check, were more apprehensive about crime than males--selected films with lower victimization scores than did males.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Selective Exposure to Justice

Analysis of variance performed on the justice scores (the summed justice restoration ratings for the films selected by the subject) yielded a significant main effect for apprehension conditions, F (1,80)=5.59, $p<.05$. As can be seen from the means (Table 3), subjects in the experimental condition selected films with higher justice scores than subjects in the control condition. The main effect for sex, while in the expected direction failed to reach significance, F (1,80)=1.89. The interaction ($F<1$) was negligible.

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

Discussion

In the present study, persons made apprehensive about crime were expected to demonstrate a greater avoidance of drama featuring victimization

than persons less apprehensive about crime. Similarly, persons made more apprehensive about crime were expected to demonstrate a greater preference for drama featuring just resolutions. Both predictions were supported by the findings. Subjects in the experimental condition--in whom apprehensions were induced via exposure to a crime documentary--selected films with lower victimization ratings and higher justice restoration ratings than subjects in the control condition.

While the correlational evidence provided by Gerbner and his colleagues can be taken to support the cultivation hypothesis (heavy viewing causes fear) and the selective exposure hypothesis (fear causes heavy viewing), only the selective exposure hypothesis can account for the present results. Consistent with basic psychological considerations, the results indicate that individuals in a negative affective state (apprehensive about crime) seek material that offers the greatest promise of relief (material which features justice) and avoid material that can reinstate the negative state (material which features victimization).

If one were to isolate the victimization results from the justice results, it could be argued that people in an aversive state avoid unpleasant stimulation regardless of the anticipated outcome. While this may be the case for those few who are extremely fearful, it runs contrary to the findings of Boyanowsky et al. (1974) and Boyanowsky (1977) which suggest that individuals who are apprehensive about being victimized are more inclined to expose themselves to violent or aggressive content than their less apprehensive counterparts. This finding can be explained by considering the anticipated consequences of exposure to aggressive content among individuals who are apprehensive about victimization. Since almost all films, and virtually all television shows, which feature victimization contain satisfying resolutions,

individuals who have "learned the formula" can expect to be somewhat relieved and comforted in the end. Evidence supporting widespread knowledge of this formula emerged in an initial pretest of film descriptions for the present study. Descriptions which told of victimization but made no mention of justice restoration were perceived by raters to promise as much justice restoration as descriptions which explicitly stated that the culprit was brought to justice. Apparently, unless explicitly informed to the contrary, raters assumed that these films would have just resolutions. Thus, it is likely that all but the most extremely fearful individuals might expose themselves to programs which contain victimization because they anticipate the gratifying restoration of justice in the end.

It would appear that the simple avoidance of unpleasant stimuli, which might be inferred from isolating the present study's results concerning victimization from those concerning justice restoration, does not readily apply to crime drama. Crime drama programs may contain distressing material, but they invariably conclude with material which should be especially gratifying to the individual who is apprehensive about victimization. Taken as a whole, it would appear that apprehensive individuals--perhaps excepting those who are extremely fearful and thus unwilling or unable to endure the distress which precedes the satisfying conclusion--should find crime drama programs particularly comforting and satisfying. Since such programs invariably contain just conclusions, the final effect on all but the most acutely fearful individuals would appear to be that they have confronted a potentially fearful stimulus in a safe place, came to no harm, and even experienced satisfaction and comfort in witnessing the culprit duly caught and punished.

Additional benefits can be projected on the basis of greater enjoyment among initially apprehensive viewers. Such individuals should experience more

distress than others while watching the show and, as a consequence, the satisfying resolution should yield particularly high levels of enjoyment. Clearly, according to this view, programs which feature victimization but are devoid of justice restoration should be particularly distressing and should be avoided by initially apprehensive individuals who are aware of the programs' departure from the familiar dramatic formula.

The long term consequence of heavy exposure to programs which feature victimization and justice are quite intriguing. If the apprehensive individual views such programs with sufficient frequency he or she should become habituated to the content. A program's anxiety producing stimuli should evoke less intense distress reactions producing concomitantly less intense euphoric reactions at the program's conclusion. Thus, the viewer who finds such programs particularly enjoyable, and who seeks them out diligently, may find that they are less appealing as they become viewed with greater frequency. In order to maintain the appeal of such material producers may provide, and the individual seek out, programs and films with higher degrees of victimization so as to maintain high enjoyment levels. Of course, the alternative is to limit one's exposure to such material via abstinence (which is unlikely) or exposure to other entertaining stimuli. Clearly, both alternatives are possible as contemporary films appear to portray higher degrees of graphic violence, and other types of entertaining fare are widely available and viewed on television and in theaters.

Alternative explanations for the present study's findings emerge from sensation seeking perspectives proposed by Zuckerman (1974, 1976) and Klausner (1968). It could be argued that subjects exposed to the crime documentary were more stimulated than those exposed to the control film and that this higher level of stimulation caused subjects in the experimental

condition to be less inclined to select stimulating material (ostensibly films which feature victimization) than their counterparts in the control group. It could likewise be argued that subjects in the control condition were more bored and might be displaying stress- or distress-seeking behavior. These individuals, who were exposed to what might have been a less interesting film would be inclined to seek stimulation more than their counterparts exposed to the crime film. These arguments, however, are not particularly compelling in interpreting the present study's results concerning both victimization and justice restoration. While a general drive for sensation may make the victimization films more attractive to subjects in the control group, there is little evidence to suggest that sensation seeking should affect subsequent exposure to material which features justice. Thus, the general nature of sensation seeking does not readily explain the present study's results regarding the greater appeal of just resolutions among those exposed to the crime documentary. Alternatively, it could be argued that persons in the experimental group, being exposed to a crime documentary, had seen enough crime and victimization for the time being, and preferred not to choose films which would contain more of the same. Subjects exposed to the control film, which contained no crime or victimization, were not "saturated" with such content and were willing to expose themselves to it. Again, however, the argument does not readily explain the present results regarding justice. Neither the crime documentary nor the control film contained depictions of justice restoration yet subjects exposed to the crime documentary subsequently selected films which depicted more justice than subjects in the control group.

Thus, the most compelling explanation for the present study's findings considers victimization and justice restoration in crime drama as a functional unit. Individuals apparently consider both the degree of victimization

involved and the likelihood of justice being served when exposing themselves to crime drama. When suspenseful drama featuring victimization is known to be devoid of a satisfying resolution, apprehensive individuals should anticipate less comfort and enjoyment and not seek out such material. However, when suspenseful drama is assumed to follow the conventional format of suspense followed by a satisfying resolution these individuals should anticipate pleasure and enjoyment and prefer such material. The initial distress which emerges from viewing the building of suspense in a program is clearly, then, a critical part of eventual enjoyment. This relationship between initial stress and eventual enjoyment has been well documented for drama (Zillmann, Hay & Bryant, 1975; Bryant, 1978) as well as for other stressful activities which produce enjoyment such as parachuting (Klausner, 1967, 1968). What is needed now is empirical evidence to support the contention that crime drama does, in fact, produce greater initial distress among those apprehensive about being a victim of violent crime, and that this initial distress converts into greater enjoyment when such programs conclude with satisfying just resolutions. Using the same logic, endings which are not satisfying (in terms of justice restoration) should yield lesser enjoyment and may even produce distress.

The present research offers an added perspective to the relationship between heavy television viewing and fear of crime. While Gerbner and Gross (1976a, 1976b) proposed that heavy viewing cultivates fear, the present findings are unexplainable within the cultivation perspective and give strong support to "selective exposure" explanations for the relationship between fear of crime and television viewing. Furthermore, the selective exposure hypothesis supported by the present investigation is readily amenable to the findings of Doob and MacDonald (1979), Hirsch (1980), and Hughes (1980) which

have been so troublesome to the cultivation perspective.

Doob and MacDonald's (1979) findings that persons who live in urban high crime neighborhoods watch more television and, particularly, more violent television is entirely consistent with the present study. Such individuals may spend more time in the safety of their homes, where television is a ready diversion, and watch more television. In addition, however, Doob and MacDonald's (1979) data indicate that urban high crime area dwellers (who, according to their findings, had the greatest fear of crime) spend a proportionately larger part of their TV viewing time with violent TV shows. Thus, those who watch the most television, and crime drama in particular, are those who are most fearful of crime.

More importantly, however, this study, and the causal connection between fear and exposure it demonstrates, is in accord with Doob and MacDonald's (1979) findings which indicated essentially no relationship between exposure and fear of crime, after controlling for the actual incidence of crime. If one considers the actual incidence of crime in a neighborhood as a major cause of fear of crime among its residents, controlling for the incidence of crime concomitantly controls for a large portion of the resident's fear of crime as well. If this fear induces greater exposure to television and crime drama in particular, controlling for crime incidence should substantially reduce the observed relationship between fear and exposure.

Similarly, Hirsch (1980) and Hughes (1980) incorporated controls for sex and age, known determinants of fear of crime (Pollack & Patterson, 1980). Instituting controls for these factors attenuates the relationship between fear and television exposure, including exposure to crime drama.

Clearly, the present study indicates that a person's state of apprehension about crime can influence the type of material they would want to watch.

Subjects in the present study were made apprehensive temporarily, via exposure to a crime documentary. There is little reason to believe that these subjects were made apprehensive for more than a few minutes. Thus, it is not necessary to assume that such persons will continue to display behavior typical of individuals in a constant state of stress. Similarly, it is not necessary to assume that individuals who are apprehensive about crime adopt permanent apprehensive traits. The maintenance of apprehension among individuals who are apprehensive about crime can be readily explained by their continued exposure to discrete events which produce elevated states of arousal. The arousal, however, is likely to dissipate if the individual is no longer subject to, or aware of, stress producing events such as physical assault. Apprehensions and fears are thus conceptualized as states rather than traits. This conception seems to contrast sharply with that of Gerbner and Gross (1976a, 1976b). Although these researchers have not specified exactly what they mean by "fear" etc., they have treated it as a created state which functions as a trait (i.e., it lasts virtually forever, and seems to have acute form while it lasts). It seems unlikely however, that a person's acute fear, or high degree of concern for personal safety, would be maintained over long periods of time without being reinstated by disturbing events. Exposure to even the most violent television show may produce acute fear for hours, or perhaps even days, but probably not for months or years.

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Table 1

Mean Factor Scores for Personal Apprehension About Crime

Sex	Exposure Condition: Crime Documentary	Control Film	Combined
Male	-.12	-.75	$-.44^{a}$
Female	.45	.33	$.39^{b}$
Combined	$.17^{A}$	$-.21^{B}$	

Note. The higher the score, the greater the apprehension. Means for the main effect of exposure conditions differed significantly at $p<.05$ (indicated by different uppercase superscripts). Means for the main effect of sex of subject differed significantly at $p<.001$ (indicated by different lowercase superscripts).

Table 2

Mean Victimization Scores of the Films Selected

Sex	Apprehension		
	Induced	Not Induced	Combined
Male	35.8	39.1	37.4^{a}
Female	30.0	33.9	32.0^{b}
Combined	32.9^{A}	36.5^{B}	

Note. Scores from each of the films could range from 0 (no pain and suffering) to 10 (a lot of pain and suffering). Means for the main effect of the apprehension induction differed significantly at $p<.05$ (indicated by different uppercase superscripts). Means for the main effect of sex of subject differed significantly at $p<.01$ (indicated by different lowercase superscripts).

Table 3

Mean Justice Scores for the Films Selected

Sex	Apprehension		
	Induced	Not Induced	Combined
Male	46.4	43.8	45.1
Female	47.1	45.5	46.3
Combined	46.8^{A}	44.7^{B}	

Note. Scores from each of the films could range from 0 (just ending extremely unlikely) to 10 (just ending extremely likely). Means for the main effect of the apprehension induction differed significantly at $p<.05$.